# A Woman's Privilege

or

## *Democracy in Dress*

by LUCY E. HOBBS

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# A WOMAN'S PRIVILEGE

by

Lucy E. Hobbs.

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# A WOMAN'S PRIVILEGE.

## *A One Act Play in Three Scenes.*

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CHARACTERS.

Mr. Jennings, the high school principal.
Ellen Gray.
Gladys Miller, an overdressed student.
Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Roberts } Members of the Woman's Club.
Alice Thompson, student and friend of Gladys Miller.
Ralph McIntyre, Tom Wentworth } Students.
Three Models.

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SCENES.

SCENE I.—Office of the high school principal in the forenoon.

SCENE II.—Front hall of the high school just after lunch.

SCENE III—Reception room of the Woman's Club House about 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

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### Synopsis of the Play.

Ellen Gray, a brilliant member of the senior class, has determined to leave school because she cannot dress as well as most of the other students. But a change in school policy is brought about just in time to prevent her carrying out her rash decision.

SCENE I—Principal's Office, (*Principal reading at his desk. Phone rings.*)

**Mr. Jennings.**—Yes, this is Mr. Jennings. You wish to see me about uniform dress for the girls? No, I am not too busy. It is a new idea to me but I shall be glad to talk with you on the subject. Good bye. (*Hangs up receiver.*) Well, I have entertained enthusiasts on every subject from temperance to a new ventilating system, but I wasn't looking for a dissertation on styles. However, if they represent the patrons of the school, they must have a hearing whatever their hobby. (*Enter Ellen Gray a student poorly dressed, agitated, books under arm.*) Well, Ellen, what can I do for you to-day?

**Ellen.**—Nothing, only I'm going to quit school.

**Mr. J.**—Quit school! Why Ellen, this is your last year. You will graduate in June. Certainly you don't mean to say—

**Ellen.**—Yes, I do, I'm going to quit.

**Mr. J.**—You do not realize what you are doing, I fear, Ellen. There must be something wrong. Have you had trouble with any of your teachers?

**Ellen.**—No.

**Mr. J.**—I didn't think it likely. Your work and deportment have always been excellent. What is the trouble?

**Ellen.**—No trouble whatever, but I've made up

my mind to go and I wanted to tell you. (*Picks up books she had dropped on desk.*)

**Mr. J.**—I can't let any student take such a step without an explanation. You must tell me why you are going You have never been unreasonable before, Ellen. You must not begin now.

**Ellen.**—(*On the verge of tears.*) Well, if you must know — this is the reason. (*Holds out skirt a little*) It's clothes, that's all. I can't stand it to be poorly dressed among the silks, chiffons, and satins up here. What joy do you suppose you would get out of school life if you had to wear clothes like these? They're the best I can afford, too. I work for my board and buy my own books and there's nothing left for silk and chiffon.

**Mr. J.**—You get the best grades in school, Ellen. The teachers are all proud of you.

**Ellen.**—What good will high grades do me? I can't get into any club, I can't go to parties. I can't have any chums or good friends. And it isn't because I'm not as clever as they are, nor as good looking, nor as smart, but all because of my clothes. That's it! It's a regular aristocracy up here with clothes as queen. Everybody pays homage by wearing the latest and each tries to outdo the rest. Do you blame me, Mr. Jennings, if I want to get out and away from here? I'm proud even if I am poor, and I can't stand it any longer.

**Mr. J.**—I see just how it is, Ellen, and I am glad you have told me all about it. I never realized before that any students felt this way, but perhaps the mothers have, and perhaps they have a solution. There is a committee coming up this very morning to talk with me about clothes. I want you to promise to stay in school until the end of the week. Perhaps then I shall have something more to say on the subject. Won't you go back to your work now as usual and try to think of nothing else until Friday?

**Ellen.**—I don't believe I can keep from thinking about my clothes, but I suppose I could stand it the rest of the week. (*Exit.*)

**Mr. J.**—Thank you. (*Aside*) Well, clothes seems to be the particular topic of this particular day. (*Enter Gladys, overdressed and haughty. Pulls her dress aside so as not to touch Ellen and gives her a disdainful look as she passes.*)

**Gladys.**—(*saucily*) You sent for me, Mr. Jennings. What's up?

**Mr. J.**—(*Recovering from his abstraction.*) Yes, yes, I did. It's about your work. Let me see. (*Gladys powders while the Principal searches in his desk for her report card.*) Your grades are far below average. Several of your teachers have complained to me about it. Your mind does not seem to be on your work. You do not seem to realize the importance of

applying yourself to your studies. Now is the time to learn all you can.

**Gladys.** — (*sighs.*) Oh, Gee! What's the use? I can't afford to spend much time on my books. I'd soon look like a scare-crow. Later on I'm going to a school of art and I can learn all I care to learn right there.

**Mr. J.**—If you are not prepared they will not accept your credits.

**Gladys.** — Any day they won't! I guess dad knows the president. Is n't that sufficient, Mr. Jennings? And there they don't keep hammering everlastingly on study. The teachers show some feeling and are willing a girl should have a little time to take care of her personal appearance.

**Mr. J.**—There is an old saying: "Pretty is that pretty does." I wish you were more like Ellen Gray. Gladys, think what fine marks she gets.

**Gladys.**—Yes, and think what she looks like and how unpopular she is. Hm, I'd run and hide myself before I'd look like her.

**Mr. J.**—Well, Gladys, you'll have to admit that when there's anything big to do around here, she is generally called on. For instance, in assembly this morning she made a fine speech. Every teacher and student that I have talked to yet has said so. None could have improved on what she did this morning. Do you think—(*phone rings. Gladys uses powder puff*

*while he talks.*) High school. I'm afraid it will be impossible. I have an important engagement with a committee from the Woman's Club this morning. We are to discuss the adoption of uniform style of dress for high school girls, and it may take some time.

**Gladys.** (*Aside.*) Uniform dress! For the love of Mike!

**Mr. J.**—Thank you. Good-bye. (*turning around*) Well, Gladys, what do you think about it? Don't you think you really ought to settle down to business and not waste so much time? All your teachers have complained.

**Gladys.**—They all take their spite out on me. I'll bet if I had different teachers I could get along all right.

**Mr. J.**—Now, let's not lay the blame on the teachers. I believe if you would make up our mind to be serious for once, that you and your teachers would be much better friends. Now you must promise.

(*Enter Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Roberts.*)

**Mrs. Brown.**—Good morning, Mr. Jennings, I believe I met you at the Rotary Club banquet, did I not?

**Mr. J.**—I think so. I am pleased to meet you again, Mrs. Brown.

**Mrs. Brown.**—Let me introduce you to Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Jennings.

**Mr. J.**—I am very glad to meet you, Mrs. Roberts.

I know your husband well. Please have chairs and we will discuss the question of high school students' dress at length. You may be excused, Gladys.

(*Exit Gladys.*)

**Mrs. Roberts.**—I hope we are not trespassing on your time, Mr. Jennings, but the mothers in the Woman's Club have come to feel that few high school problems are of more importance than that of the girls' dress.

**Mrs. Brown.** — You spoke over the phone as if you had not thought much about the matter, Mr. Jennings. We are not talking about the question of styles, tho surely good taste in dressing is as much a part of a high school girl's education as algebra or history. But we are especially thinking about the influence clothes have upon the relations of the girls with each other. How friendships are formed and broken up according to the clothes worn.

**Mrs. Roberts.**—You know girls are thoughtless creatures.

**Mrs. Brown.**—And the strain that is put upon many poor homes in the effort to send their daughters to school as well dressed as their wealthier neighbors.

**Mr. J.**—After what has happened this morning I am quite inclined to agree with you that there should be some change in this regard in our public high schools.

**Mrs. Brown.**—We feel that just now, when so much is being said about democracy, some uniform styles could be introduced that would be both simple and becoming. Gradually a measure of uniformity would take the place of the great distinctions in dress now so apparent, and in the end, both democracy and good taste would be promoted. But you spoke a moment ago as if something had happened to point the moral to our tale.

**Mr. J.**—So there has. Only a few moments ago one of our most brilliant and industrious girls came to tell me that she had made up her mind to leave school because she cannot afford to dress like the others. As she passed out, another student, the one you saw, came in. She is a student only in name. All her thought and time are expended on her personal appearance and her school work suffers accordingly. We certainly have these two types, and neither extreme is desirable.

**Mrs. Roberts.**—That is just the way the mothers feel. Those who cannot afford to wear opera clothes to school every day, or whose sense of propriety will not permit them to do so, are made to feel shabby in comparison with those who do. Cliques are springing up and friendships are being formed on the false standard of clothes. Meanwhile, the girls are learning to judge from appearances only

and to conclude that it makes no difference whether they learn anything or not if they are only dressed in the height of style.

**Mr. J.**—I suppose the mothers would be saved a great deal of work and worry, too, if there were a few standard styles to choose from.

**Mrs. Brown.**—Yes, Mr. Jennings, you would be surprised to know how many mothers go shabby themselves that their daughters may wear expensive clothes to school and how much time they spend sewing when they ought to be doing other things.

**Mrs. R.**—You know it is human nature to want to keep up with Sally. That is why there must be concerted action. A few working alone can accomplish but little.

**Mr. J.**—But could uniform styles be agreed on by so many mothers?

**Mrs. B.**—Yes, I think so, Mr. Jennings. Some high schools already have adopted the plan and it has been the custom in the eastern schools for many years. In our own, the graduating dresses are all alike, you know, and the girls seem to like that.

**Mr. J.**—Yes, the plan certainly works at Commencement time. I should be sorry to go back to the old way.

**Mrs. R.**—The mothers we represent favor a style for warm weather, another for winter, and one more

easily varied, but still simple for parties and club affairs.

(*Enter two students, Ralph Jones and Alice Thompson.*)

**Mr. J.**—The plan seems feasible. Do you wish to present it to the board or shall I handle the matter? I'm willing to do whatever you advise. Excuse me a moment, please. Well Ralph?

**Ralph.**—(*nodding toward girl.*) We were sent here for talking too much in class.

**Mr. J.**—For talking too much! That's a bad thing to do. You may sit down over there until the end of the period.

**Mrs. B.**—You were speaking of presenting the question of uniform dress to the board, Mr. Jennings. I think you can do it much better than either of us. And when the board sees how one style of dress promotes democracy, good taste, and the economy we are all trying to practice just now, I don't see how they can help but adopt it. Then if you will present the matter to the students in a favorable light, we will undertake to see the mothers we have not already talked to.

**Mrs. R.**—And now we must not take any more of your time, Mr. Jennings. I'm afraid we have detained you too long already.

**Mr. J.**—Not at all ladies. I'm very glad you came up, and I certainly consider the time well spent.

And now may I show you over the building? We are always glad to have the patrons visit the school.

**Mrs. R.**—It will be a pleasure to visit the high-school again. I used to do so often, before my son graduated three years ago.

**Mrs. B.**—My only daughter slipped away from me just as she was ready to enter high school. If she had lived she would have graduated in this year's class. I think that is why I am so interested in everything here. I want to know about the things she would have been interested in.

**Mr. J.**—That is very natural, Mrs. Brown.

(*Exeunt Ladies and Mr. Jennings.*)

**Alice.**—Well, if that isn't the limit. Come up here and go telling us how to dress. As if we didn't know already.

**Ralph.**—What's the idea? I didn't just get the drift of it?

**Alice.**—Why, they want us to wear dresses all alike! "Uniform dress" they called it. Didn't you hear? I suppose that means we're to have one dress and everybody's dress is like everybody's else.

**Ralph.**—Well they've got their nerve. They have no right to butt in like that. That's all I've got to say. We can manage our own affairs. Of course you girls know how to dress. Say, do you have the remotest idea they're going to make the boys wear uniform dresses, too?

**Alice.**—Very likely. (*Bell rings*) There goes the bell. They'll come as near making you do it as me. I'm not going to have anybody tell me how to dress, and I know Gladys and lots of the other girls will feel the same way.

**Ralph.**—So long. See you after lunch.

(*Exeunt, one from each side of the stage. Curtain.*)

SCENE II—*Front hall of high school building. Enter Tom and Gladys from opposite sides of stage.*

**Tom.**—Hello, Glad! What's your hurry?

**Gladys.**—Oh, Mabel Smith said she'd let me have her math. if I came early. The teachers have been squealing on me and Jenny says I've got to get better grades. Don't stop me.

**Tom.**—There's no rush. It's twenty minutes till class time and it won't take you ten to copy those problems. I say wasn't that some assembly we had this morning? Best in years! Got the same old pep back again, eh?

**Gladys.**—Uh-huh. If the boys don't win with a send-off like that I'll never speak to any of them again.

**Tom.**—Easier said than done, both ways. Didn't Jim look classy in his white ducks and maroon jersey?

**Gladys.**—I'll say so, but I think Ellen Gray looked absolutely disreputable speaking on the platform in that terrible looking dress.

**Tom.**—There you go! Can't say anything but you'll begin to criticize the way she's dressed. I think it was a blamed good speech.

**Gladys.**—Don't get mad, Tommy dear. Nothing personal, I hope. In fact I don't know but I quite admire her nerve myself going up before that crowd looking the way she did.

**Tom.**—You could admire worse things.

(*Enter Ralph and Alice.*)

**Ralph.**—Well its some idea—

**Tom.**—What's that?

**Alice.**—Why we were in—

**Ralph.**—Now, Alice let me do the talking. The Woman's Club has undertaken the job of running this high school. (*Gladys is powdering*)

**Tom.**—What do you mean?

**Ralph.**—I mean they're coming up to tell you (*nodding toward Gladys*) how to dress.

**Gladys.**—You mean that's what they're trying to do. I heard all about it when I was visiting with Jenny this morning.

**Tom.**—How to dress?

**Ralph.**—Yes, you've all got to dress alike (*to girls*) Uniform dress, you know. White middies, blue skirts, red ties—hundreds of 'em.

**Alice.**—Ralph and I happened to go into the office.

**Tom.**—Oh!

**Alice.** — Just as two women were coming out and we overheard them say it would be so much more democratic if we were all dressed just alike. I think it's the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard

**Ralph.**—And Jenny seemed to agree with 'em. I didn't think he'd fall for any such stuff.

**Gladys.**—Imagine me coming to school dressed in a plain blue sailor suit.

**Alice.**—All the girls dressed just alike, like a bunch of kids from an orphan asylum.

**Tom.**—We won't be able to tell one from the other except by the do they get on their hair.

**Ralph.**—Yep, and that's all the same—two puffs over the ears and straight back in the middle.

**Alice.**—Who asked you to say anything about the way we dress our hair? I think we aught to do something to show those women how perfectly crazy the whole idea is.

**Tom.**—I've got it! Have a big parade. Invite the whole Woman's Club. Have the girls dressed in plain black dresses with white collars and cuffs.

**Ralph.**—I say, Glad, you lead the procession.

(*Enter Ellen not seen by students.*)

**Gladys.**—I should say not. I wouldn't disgrace myself by walking thro the streets looking like that. But we won't have uniform dress just the same.

**Alice.**—Not if we have anything to say about it.

Why it would mean that we would have to wear the same kind of things as Ellen Gray does and all the rest of 'em. Why just think how terrible she looked in the assembly this morning.

(*Ellen steps forward much excited. Ralph whistles.*)

**Tom.**—(*Aside*) Good Night.

**Ellen.**—I didn't mean to be eavesdropping but I couldn't help but overhearing what you just said. I don't care what you think about me, but if anybody is going to try to start the idea of simpler dressing in this school, you ought to think twice before you oppose it. It's all very well for you who can afford rich clothes and everything else you want, but how about the rest of us? Do you suppose I or any of the girls dress this way because we like to?

**Gladys.**—I suppose it is kind of hard on you, Ellen, to have to dress that way but how can we help it? Why, I wouldn't care to come to school if I couldn't look nice. I'd rather have pretty clothes than all the good grades in the world.

**Ellen.**—That's just it. Nothing but clothes counts up here. Why, none of you (*turning to all*) would walk down the hall with anyone as poorly dressed as I am. (*Turning to boys*) You vie with each other to see which one can walk the farthest with what you call a stunningly dressed girl, and you just as carefully avoid the shabby ones. And that isn't all!

Why, we don't even have a chance to show what we can do in school activities just because we don't have the right sort of clothes.

**Tom.**—Why you recite—and get high grades, and even speak on the platform. I don't see—

**Ellen.**—That's just it—You don't see. Do we get into Clubs? Do we go to parties or anything else out side of classes? Do you know that Mary Smith has a perfectly marvelous voice? But she can't show it because she's so ashamed of her clothes that she won't get up before the Glee Club.

**Alice.**—But, Ellen, it's not our fault if she's poor and ashamed of it.

**Ellen.**—It is your fault when you dress so much better than we can. There are lots of girls just like Mary Smith, and if there was a uniform style of dress they wouldn't feel so different from the rest.

**Gladys.**—Oh, my dear, she's only one in a thousand. Why should all of us wear the same cheap clothes just to please her.

**Ellen.**—Because this is democratic America, that's why. But it won't make much difference to me because I'm leaving. I'm only trying to make things a little easier for the rest who have to keep on.

**Ralph.**—Leaving school? Why, Ellen, you don't mean that? You aren't leaving school on account of clothes, are you?

**Ellen.**—Yes, I am. If you want the truth, that's just it.

**Gladys.**—(*Yawning.*) This whole thing makes me tired! And all about nothing, too.

**Ellen.**—Maybe it does seem like nothing to you, but if you had been born in a poor family—(*Enter Mr. Jennings. Ralph coughs.*)

**Mr. J.**—What's all the disturbance? You know you are making considerable noise. (*Looks at boys.*)

**Tom.**—I say, we might just as well ask him about it. Say, Mr. Jennings, what's all this stuff about uniform dress, anyway. We were just having a heated little argument over it.

**Mr. J.**—Oh, that's it?

**Alice.**—Yes, and I think it is absolutely awful! Why, how dare they tell us what we should wear? What do they know about it, anyhow?

**Ralph.**—Why, I don't see as it would be so bad.

**Alice.**—Oh! Ralph, there you go again. You are always carried away by your feelings. Just because Ellen's story seems a little pitiful, you want all the rest of us to be condemned to dress like criminals.

**Tom.**—I can't say I think it's such a bad plan, but,—

**Gladys.**—Of course you don't. Anything Ralph says goes with you.

**Tom.**—Now you don't need to jump on me like that. I was going to say I didn't think it would work, but you wouldn't let me finish. Didn't I suggest the parade, and you wouldn't listen to that either.

**Mr. J.**—Parade?

**Alice.**—Yes, they wanted us to have an anti-uniform dress parade and show the people how ridiculous the whole idea is. Now honest, Mr. Jennings, don't you think it would be awful for all the girls in school to be dressed exactly alike in black dresses, with white collars and cuffs?

**Gladys.**—We never could stand it.

**Mr. J.**—But you people have the wrong idea of uniform dress entirely. It doesn't mean any such thing as you imagine at all. I was going to explain the whole matter in assembly tomorrow and then appoint a committee of students to talk it over with the ladies who saw me this forenoon. But since you students have already begun to talk and have such wrong notions I think I will not delay. Would you like for me to take action at once?

**All.**—Yes—Uh! Huh!

**Mr. J.**—Well then, I suggest that some of you go down this afternoon and consult with the committee from the Woman's Club. In fact I will

appoint you, Ellen, and you, Ralph, and you, Gladys, as a committee to do so. I will phone to the ladies that you will meet them at four o'clock. (*Bell rings*) Until you have more information, let there be no more talking among the other students. Now hurry to your classes.

SCENE III—(*Reception Room of Woman's Club House. Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Roberts sitting at a table, knitting.*

**Mrs. R.**—Purl two, knit two. Purl two, knit two. But I pity the ladies on the Rhine casting pearls before their swine! (*Both laugh.*)

**Mrs. B.**—Where did you pick up that classic?

**Mrs. R.**—Oh, I heard it at the high school this morning. I saw and heard a number of interesting things up there. I only wish I were a girl again and right there with the rest of them.

**Mrs. B.**—I would be quite contented if only my little daughter were there. Her class is graduating this Spring, and somehow I feel as if I must know all about what goes on at Commencement time and must provide some girl with all the things girls want then almost as much as they do when they get married. Do you remember the name of the Senior that Mr. Jennings says is droping out of school on account of clothes?

**Mrs. R.**—Yes, it's Ellen Gray. She's on the

committee and the only one of the three I have met.

**Mrs. B.**—You must introduce her to me as soon as she comes. Somehow I feel as if we were destined to be great friends. I remember the names of the other two, Gladys Miller and Ralph McIntyre, but I have never seen either of them.

**Mrs. R.**—Neither have I, but I don't imagine they will feel at all bashful about introducing themselves. In fact I'm afraid I shall be the one to feel timid, for I gathered from the little Mr. Jennings said over the phone, that the committee do not feel entirely favorable.

**Mrs. B.**— That is just what I thought, but we must try our best to make them see it as we do; for it means so much to the mothers and girls both. The need for such a reform is felt all over the country. Why just yesterday I picked up the January copy of the Delineator and saw an account of a big high school in the South where uniform dress has been adopted with the best of results.

**Mrs. R**—Yes, the idea is spreading. I've not talked to a single mother who didn't favor it.

**Mrs. B.**—Nor I, and I'm so glad we have the models ready. Are you sure they will be here soon after four?

**Mrs. R.**—Yes, the girls made a solemn promise to be prompt, and Oh! the costumes do look sweet. I know the students will like them.

**Mrs. B.** (*Listening.*) I believe the committee is coming. (*Smoothes hair.*)

**Mrs. R.**—(*Rising.*) I will meet them.

(*Goes toward door.*)

(*Enter Ellen Gray, Gladys Miller and Ralph McIntyre.*)

**Mrs. R.**—How do you do, Miss Ellen?

(*Mrs. B. comes forward.*) This is Mrs. Brown, Miss Gray. (*Mrs. B. greets Ellen and takes charge of her.*)

**Gladys to Mrs. R.**—My name is Gladys Miller.

(*Extends hand affectedly.*)

**Mrs. R.**—I am very glad to meet you, my dear. I am Mrs. Roberts.

**Gladys.**—And this is Mr. Ralph McIntyre.

(*Ralph shakes hands with Mrs. R.*)

**Mrs. R.**—I am pleased to meet you, Ralph. Mrs. Brown, let me introduce Miss Gladys Miller and Mr. Ralph McIntyre.

**Mrs. B.**—I'm most happy to meet you both, and now let us be seated and talk over the dress question. Doesn't that sound interesting? To begin, we were up to see your principal about it this morning.

**Ralph.**—Yes, we know. You see I went into the office just as you came out. That's where we got wind of it.

**Mrs. B.**—Oh! and you have discussed it since then among yourselves?

**Ellen.**—Why yes, we had quite a discussion this noon. You see it doesn't appeal to all of them as it does to me.

**Mrs. R.**—No?

**Gladys.**—(*Who has been growing impatient.*) No! I should say not! Why, it's too silly to think we can't even wear what we want.

**Mrs. B.**—But are you sure you understand what it would mean to many of the girls who cannot afford the beautiful things you wear?

**Ellen.**—That's just what she doesn't. If she only could see how wonderful it would be for some she wouldn't object, I'm sure.

**Gladys.**—I understand all I care to. There's no reason why we can't wear the same sort of clothes we always have worn. Why it's not only the girls, but even the boys don't like the idea, do they Ralph?

**Ralph.**—Well, of course the fellows like to go with a girl that looks nice, you know.

**Mrs. R.**—Of course you do, and that is right. The world would be much sadder than it is if it were to lose the beauty of its girlhood. You may

be sure we mothers prize it more than you boys possibly can. And we believe the styles we have chosen will show sweet girlish looks to the very best advantage. I wish the models were here.

**Ellen.**—Oh, are we going to see the styles you've selected?

**Mrs. B.**—Yes, our models will be here any moment. We have chosen a Peter Tompson for winter, another one-piece style for warmer weather, and a pretty little party dress for class and club affairs. I am just sure you will like them. We mothers have spent no end of time planning this all out.

**Ralph.**—That doesn't sound so bad.

**Gladys.**—And we can have only three dresses? (*Angrily.*)

**Mrs. R.**—You can have any number you desire, of course. We are merely suggesting some standard styles and materials that we think appropriate for school wear. They won't all have to be exactly alike. There is plenty of room for individuality.

**Mrs. B.**—You know some schools have already adopted the plan. Some of them I have visited, so I know how it works. I have visited high schools where there was not a silk stocking nor a high heeled slipper, nor a silk petticoat to be seen. And yet it was marvelous what a variety there was in the

girls' dress. Linen and serge of nearly every color and ties of every shade, and with it all the free gait and lack of self-consciousness that belong to simple clothing.

**Mrs. R.**—Out of school, all the silks and fluffles that fond fathers and mothers can provide, but in school a real democracy.

**Ralph.**—I say if that's what you're after, something that will make the spirit of the school more democratic, and the girls won't look too awful bad, I think it's just what we want. What's your objection, Gladys?

**Mrs. B.**—Yes, tell us your real objections, Miss Miller.

**Gladys.**—Why—why—Just because—Why—we always have worn the other dresses, and I never could see but what they were all right. Why—I think they're pretty. And I know I'll look like a fright in a uniform and (*Bell rings.*)

**Mrs. R.**—The models have come, I'll bring them right in. (*Rises.*)

**Mrs. B.**—(*To Gladys*) What if you should like them after all? (*Enter three models, one in a Peter Tompson, one in a one-piece linen or other light material, one in a simple cotton afternoon frock. They move about where they can be easily seen while the others look and admire.*)

**Ellen.**—(*Joyously.*) Oh! they are just beautiful. I just love them all.

(*Mrs. Brown takes Ellen to one side and they talk in low tones; while the others continue to admire the costumes.*)

**Ralph.**—Glad., you'd look like a peach in that blue one. My sister's got to have a summer dress just like that other one. (*Pointing.*)

(*Enter Mr. Jennings.*)

**Mrs. R.**—Oh, you're just in time, Mr. Jennings. We are just looking at the models. What do you think of them?

**Mr. J.**—They are prettier than I had imagined. I don't see a single objection. Some such standard styles would improve the looks of our school a hundred percent.

**Gladys.**—(*Brightening.*) Do you think so, Mr. Jennings?

**Mr. J.**—I know it. Besides, it would save no end of time and worry for the parents and would do more than anything else to make our school democratic, and we need the right spirit just now more than ever before.

**Ralph.**—Is it so that Ellen Gray is going to drop school on account of clothes, Mr. Jennings?

**Mr. J.**—Yes, that's what she says, and I don't know how many others feel the same way.

(*Mrs. Brown and Ellen step forward arm in arm. Ellen has slipped on a Peter Tompson.*)

**Mrs. B.**—She has changed her mind, Mr. Jennings. You know that is a woman's privilege. She is to be my very own daughter for the rest of the year. (*Clap hands and shout.*)

**All.**—Good! Good!

**Ralph.**—Bully for you, Ellen.

**Gladys.**—(*Stepping forward.*) Did you say it is a woman's privilege to change her mind?

**All.**—(*Shouting.*) Yes, Yes.

**Gladys.**—I move that the chairman of this committee carry back a unanimous report in favor of democracy in dress.

(*Curtain.*)

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